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Northwestern Division

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Libby Dam operations announced for 2007

Portland, Ore. – The Corps announced this year’s planned operations for Libby Dam in a decision document signed today by Brig. Gen. Gregg F. Martin, Commander of the Northwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“Public life and safety – people and their dwellings– is our first priority,” said Martin. “We are responsible to minimize the risk to the public as we operate for local and system flood damage reduction, provide flows for threatened and endangered species and meet other project purposes.

“We believe that in 2007, a strict VARQ flood control operation with fish flows will best serve the public interests,” he said.

The decision document, a follow-up to the Corps After-Action Report on the Kootenai River Spring 2006 flood event, considers input and recommendations received during public meetings and listening sessions with Federal, Tribal and State agencies.

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2-2-2-2 LIBBY DAM OPERATIONS

Under strict VARQ flood control, an alternative to standard flood control, the Corps will operate Libby Dam to provide additional water releases in the spring for sturgeon, and in the summer for Columbia River salmon and steelhead. However, strict VARQ makes it less likely to achieve refill, with potentially less water available for salmon and steelhead flows in July and August than in previous years.

The Corps would vary from VARQ operating procedures only on a short-term basis to protect human life and safety, avoid river stages higher than the 1,764-foot flood stage at Bonner's Ferry, and comply with requirements of an International Joint Commission order addressing Libby Dam effects on Kootenay Lake in Canada.

The decision document addresses only 2007 operations at Libby Dam. A decision on future operations will require additional evaluation and risk analysis, particularly of flexible operations.

For more information, visit: www.nws.usace.army.mil.

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Hyperlinks: [Click here](#) to access the 2007 Libby Dam decision document and view the Corps After-Action Review of the 2006 Spring Flood Event.